

To: Peterson, Cynthia[Peterson.Cynthia@epa.gov]
From: editor@mountainwestnews.org
Sent: Fri 10/23/2015 6:29:49 PM
Subject: Mountain West News Daily Newsletter

Harvesting Grain South Of Chester

Photo courtesy of
Rick and Susie
Graetz

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Mountain West News is a
program of the
O'Connor Center for the Rocky
Mountain West at
The University of Montana

Friday,
Oct. 23, 2015

Produced by Shellie Nelson, MW News Editor

[Mountain West Voices](#)

Editor's notes:

In the **Rockies today**, a dire assessment of disappearing glaciers in the Canadian Rockies, national efforts in Canada and the U.S. to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and a report on the Gold King Mine spill in Colorado are in the news.

In Canada, Peyto Glacier in Banff National Park is one of the most studied in the world, and a scientist who has been studying the glacier for years said it is "disintegrating" before his eyes.

Dr. John Pomeroy blames the changing climate and urges action before it's too late.

He may be heartened by Prime Minister-designate Justin Trudeau's pledge to set national standards for greenhouse-gas reductions, and Alberta's pledge to cooperate with the national plan.

In the United States, the Environmental Protection Agency published the rules promulgating President Obama's Clean Energy Plan today, and so far 27 states have pledged to challenge that plan, which provides state-by-state goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

In Wyoming, legislators are to vote today on a measure that would require legislative approval of any federal plan, or a final federal court ruling on it.

The Interior Department completed its investigation of the Gold King Mine spill in August in Colorado that found the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency erred when no work was done to determine the amount of water held in the mine before work was done to clear a portal, and cited inadequate engineering as well.

Barbara Theroux reviews [three books that examine the West's](#)

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Montana's two-year colleges
[revamp education to meet](#)

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A U.S. House subcommittee held a hearing on cleaning up inactive mines, a hearing prompted by the Colorado mine spill, with Republican lawmakers resisting calls for an increase in royalties to ensure funding for mine cleanups, and instead endorsing a "Good Samaritan" approach that would limit the liability of mine reclamation work done by third parties.

Also in Colorado, the Federal Reserve denied the would-be Fourth Corner Credit Union, created specifically to handle the tens of millions of dollars generated by the marijuana industry, the approval it needs to open.

And finally, in [Environment](#), a look back at the Idaho Department of Fish and Game's deployment of beaver into the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness, by parachute six decades ago – with video.

On Sunday afternoon at 1 o'clock, former Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer will be at Fact & Fiction in downtown Missoula to read from and sign his new book, ["Power Up.energy: How the Coming Revolution Will Empower You, Free Us All From Oil Wars and Make You a Buck or Two."](#)

Quote of the day:

"The Rockies are literally coming out of the Ice Age and we are seeing this [happen now]. Future generations driving down the Icefields Parkway will wonder why they named it that. ... We used to have three ice stations on the glacier and ... all three have been destroyed by the ice melt being so fast that the poles come out of the ice and the stations fall over."

Dr. John Pomeroy, director of the Centre for Hydrology at the University of Saskatchewan, discussing the [pace that glaciers in the Canadian Rockies, and specifically the Peyto Glacier in Banff National Park, are melting.](#)
- Toronto Globe and Mail

Rockies today

[Scientist: Pace of glacier melt in Canadian Rockies speeding up](#)

John Pomeroy, director of the Centre for Hydrology at the University of Saskatchewan, said that the Peyto Glacier, located 56 miles northwest of Banff in Alberta that has been studied since the 1950s, is melting at a pace that it, and hundreds of other glaciers in the Canadian Rockies, will be gone in our lifetimes, providing clear evidence of climate change.

Toronto Globe and Mail; October 23

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[Alberta pledges cooperation with federal climate change efforts](#)

Prime Minister-designate Justin Trudeau announced that he will set targets for Canada to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and that he will work with provinces on developing their own standards, a message that Alberta Environment Minister Shannon Phillips welcomed.

Calgary Herald; October 23

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Publication of President Obama's climate regulations prompt lawsuits

The Environmental Protection Agency's regulations that are at the center of President Obama's climate change agenda that set state-by-state goals on reducing greenhouse gas emissions will publish today in the Federal Register, but at least 25 states are ready to file lawsuits challenging the rules, and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell will introduce resolutions to block the rules, which President Obama will likely veto should they pass.

New York Times; October 23

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Wyoming legislators draft measure to block federal Clean Power Plan

Under President Obama's proposed Clean Power Plan, Wyoming would have to cut its greenhouse gas emissions between 37 and 44 percent, one of the largest reductions under the plan in the U.S., but state legislators will consider a measure today, the State Power Accountability and Reliability Charter, which would block the federal law unless the Legislature authorizes state agencies to comply with the law or if a federal court upholds the legality of the Clean Power Plan.

Casper Star-Tribune (Wyoming Tribune Eagle); October 23

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Publication of Clean Power Plan rules prompts Colorado AG's vow to fight

Colorado Attorney General Cynthia Coffman renewed her vows to fight the federal Clean Power Plan on Friday, the day the rules promulgating the plan were published in the Federal Register, and Coffman said Colorado was one of 24 states that will sue to stop the plan, and that more states are considering joining the lawsuit.

Denver Post; October 23

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Interior report: Colorado gold mine spill was entirely preventable

The U.S. Department of Interior released its report Thursday on its investigation into the Aug. 5 spill at the Gold King Mine in Colorado that said the Environmental Protection Agency and its contractors could have prevented the disaster by checking for water levels in the mine before proceeding with clean-up work, which the report concluded was rushed and done without adequate engineering.

Denver Post; October 23

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- Download a copy of the Interior Dept.'s Gold King Mine investigation

You can download a copy of the Interior Department's report on its investigation of the Gold King Mine spill.

U.S. Department of Interior; October 23

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U.S. House panel holds hearing on cleaning up inactive mines

On Wednesday, the U.S. House Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment held a hearing on addressing the tens of thousands of inactive mines that dot the American landscape, and the potential threat of those mines, with most of the testimony focusing on the Aug. 5 Gold King Mine spill in Colorado. Republican lawmakers were resistant to new fees to fund the cleanup, and instead promoted "Good Samaritan" laws that would allow third

parties to avoid liabilities when reclaiming mines, while experts said new fees and royalties and Good Samaritan laws are not mutually exclusive.

Durango Herald; October 23

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Federal Reserve stands firm on marijuana money in Colorado

Colorado's marijuana industry has a cash problem, as in what to do with all the cash it generates since under federal law, marijuana is still illegal under federal law and banks operate under federal law, and on Wednesday, Colorado's plan to establish a credit union to handle pot-industry cash was crushed by the Federal Reserve, when it denied clearance to the would-be Fourth Corner Credit Union.

Durango Herald; October 23

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Energy market slide begins to hit home in Wyoming

Low oil and natural gas prices have hit some areas of Wyoming, and some sectors of the state's economy, with 4,200 jobs lost in the energy sector between August of 2014 and this August, but in Cheyenne, new data centers and school construction projects have the economy humming.

Casper Star-Tribune; October 23

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Opinion

The last thing aboriginal women in Canada need is another inquiry

Prime Minister-designate Justin Trudeau's promise to investigate missing and exploited aboriginal girls and women misses the mark, as there have been expensive, extensive inquiries in the past, filling up tomes about the social and economic risk factors, and Trudeau's vow will lead to more of the same, when what is needed is a partnership between aboriginal communities and social service agencies to address the risk factors in the homes and communities in which the women and girls live, and that is where Trudeau needs to start his initiative.

Calgary Herald; October 23

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It's long past time for Idaho legislators to show support for small business

Idaho legislators are profuse in their praise for the small businesses in the Gem State, but the decision to not join the multi-state streamlined sales tax project, which would allow the state to collect its 6 percent sales tax on online purchase, because of the harm the tax would impose on residents, indicates that legislators admiration for small businesses is just talk, and if the 6 percent sales tax for online purchases is too much for Idahoans to pay, it's too much for them to pay when they shop locally.

Idaho Mountain Express (Sun Valley); October 23

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Lower loonie a big boon to B.C.-based Great Little Box Company

Richmond-based Great Little Box Company, which makes packaging for companies in both Canada and the United States, said the lower exchange rate for the loonie has business booming at its production facilities in British Columbia. *A column by Barbara Yaffe.*

Vancouver Sun; October 23

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Environment:

BLM to remove remaining wild horses from Idaho area burned by Soda Fire

Politics:

Wyoming governor stops in Japan first on overseas trade mission

Legislature:

Utahns to pay double-digit increases for health insurance next year

Community:

Light-rail service will arrive at Denver airport in April

Tribes:

FEMA declines Navajo Nation's emergency request for Colorado mine spill

Economy:

Report: Discrimination at root of Utah's gender-pay gap

Community:

Federal judge denies Utah county commissioner a new trial

Economy:

Western resorts report busy summer, but winter bookings down

Environment:

B.C. Hydro's Site C dam work begins with destruction of bald eagle nests

Mountain West Voices

Mountain West Voices

On the Bookshelf

Mountain West Perspectives

A Look Ahead

On the Bookshelf

wildfires, issues

Perspectives

changing workplace demands

Voices

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